

Places, Things & Events

DETAILS TO HELP COMPLETE THE STORY

LINCOLN FUNERAL IN SPRINGFIELD

One of the best descriptions of the statehouse and Representatives Hall decorations is in the *Cincinnati Commercial* for May 11, 1865. Below is a verbatim transcription of the article.

THE STATEHOUSE, HALL, AND ROTUNDA.

“Outside, the capitol was profusely draped. The great black dome, covered with copper, was dotted with countless rosettes and white streamers; the columns surrounding it were wrapped spirally with white cloth, and numerous flags, heavily draped, were displayed. All around the cornice were graceful festoons of black and white, gathered up to the sides, while at the top of the upper sash was a narrow strip of white, scalloped. From the window sills depended curtains of black, edged with white. The great columns in front of the entrance are fluted, and, in each alternate flute, was a rope of evergreen extending the whole length of the column. The hall, on the first floor, was draped with strips of black, representing panels, around the corners were festoons looped up with rosettes, from which depended white streamers. The second story was similarly decorated. High up in the dome, hung a frame-work, composed of ropes of evergreen, shaped in the form of an oriole’s nest. I know not to what else to liken it, then a great basket of sunshine, hanging in the solemn dome.” [p. 1, col. 1]

REPRESENTATIVES’ HALL.

“But how shall I worthily describe the decorations and magnificence of this place? Not that it was bewildering or confusing in its appointment, but because it was so tasteful and artistic, that nothing less than the accuracy of a sun-picture could do it full justice. The hall has the form of a semi-circle, with the Speaker’s desk in the center, and opposite the gallery. The gallery is supported by columns, which only touch the front of it, and reach to the ceiling. The ceiling is finished in lacunaria, which are in the form of rays, centering over the desk, and representing the beams of the sun. This design was conformed to and completed in decorating the hall. As before, only the ceilings represented the heavens and the shining of the sun, the artist, in preparing for the pageant, extended this representation over the wall in rear of the speaker’s desk, which had been removed. First, to avoid the difficult task of representing the sun in his strength, as well as to cast a subdued tint over the whole, the sun was represented as being under a cloud, which consisted of an irregular fold of black tarlatan hung in the angle of the ceiling and the wall, which had below it a semicircular piece of blue tarlatan representing the sky. Under this was stretched a back-ground of white cloth which served to mellow the blue into that hue which it wears near the actual sun. Extending outward from this field of blue, were diverging stripes of pale red tarlatan which, alternating with the under-lying white, fitly depicted the radiating beams of the sun, as seen issuing from a cloud. To continue the ideal landscape, there were set in the two corners of the hall numerous evergreen trees and shrubs, irregularly arranged to appear like a forest, while in front of the platform on which was the catafalque, were set pot-plants bearing flowers and giving an agreeable fragrance to the air of the hall. Under the gallery near the edge, was hung a looped curtain of black barege, covered with a narrower one of

white,, of the same material, showing a black border all around. On the front of the gallery, and between each two columns, were hung panels of rich, black, silk velvet, surrounded near the edge, with a strip of silver lace and edged on the lower side with fringe of the same. In the center were crossed branches of the olive worked in white. Half way up each column was hung a wreath of evergreen and white roses; on the center column, just above the wreath, was a clock surrounded in crape, with its hands stopped at the hour (7:22 A.M.) at which Mr. Lincoln died. All around the upper edge of the gallery was stretched a rope of evergreen, and at the top, in rear of the columns, was a hanging of black barege, looped up between the columns and fastened with black and white rosettes. The capitals of the columns were of the Roman Ionic order, and between the scrolls (four) at the extreme top of the capital, were rosettes, from which depended two short streamers of black barege. Over the top of each scroll was passed a streamer of the same material, which at a point two feet below the top of the



column, and an eighth of the distance around it, met another similar streamer, to which it was attached by a rosette, and from this point it reached down to the floor. On two opposite sides of the pillars these streamers were wide, concealing from view a great part of it; on the other two sides they extended only a third of the way to the floor. The windows of the hall were furnished with heavy silk velvet curtains, edged with silver lace. Around the top of the gallery, extending through the whole semi-

circle, was a strip of black velvet, bearing, in large white letters, the sentence, 'SOONER THAN SURRENDER THESE PRINCIPLES I WOULD BE ASSASSINATED ON THE SPOT.' At the same elevation, to the left of the Speaker's desk, was, 'WASHINGTON THE FATHER,' on the right, 'LINCOLN THE SAVIOR.' Behind the coffin, against the wall, was placed a life-size oil painting of Washington, placed at such a level that he appeared to be standing on the platform. The frame was covered loosely with blue tarlatan. On the right of the platform, hanging against a pilaster, was an engraving of Mr. Lincoln, the frame covered with evergreen and immortelles, above it, a cross covered with small white flowers." [p.1, cols. 1-2]

THE CATAFALQUE.

"The Speaker's desk was removed and in its place a much larger platform erected, which was reached by four steps. The top of this platform was sprinkled with evergreen, small white lilies and sprigs of the spirea. In the center of it stood the catafalque, seven feet, six inches long, three feet wide, and as many high. On top of this was an inclined platform, six inches high at one end, and sloping thence down to the level of the catafalque. This was on order that the body might be better exposed to view. The body of the catafalque was covered with silk velvet, encircled with five different bands of silver lace, and from the top depended a narrow curtain of the same

fringed with silver, with a silver tassel at each loop, and the whole shrouded in a hanging of black crape. The sides and the end of the inclined platform were studded with thirty-six silver stars.” [p. 1, col. 2]

THE CANOPY.

“The canopy was of the kind known as the Egyptian canopy. The roof was of the pagoda form, hexagonal at the base, and resting on six columns, one at each corner. Its entire height, from the platform to the top of the roof, was twenty-four feet, the columns were thirteen feet long, and the length of each of the sides was ten feet. The top was covered with fifty-two yards of rich broadcloth, heavily plaited; black plumes, tipped with white, two feet high and eighteen inches in diameter, surmounted each corner; between them were small, white eagles, shrouded in crape, and on the tope was a plume like the others, but larger. The inside of the roof was first lined with blue cambric, and outside of it thin white barege, modifying the blue to represent the sky, and covered with 300 silver stars. The cornice was covered with black velvet, and in the center of each of the sides and at each corner, was a half Egyptian sun, of black satin, with a single silver star at the center of it. The capitals of the columns were covered with white velvet, the shafts with black. On each side of the columns were curtains of black velvet wide enough to close about a quarter of the interval between, edged with silver lace, and gathered to the columns, near the bottom, by loops of the same. Half-way up each column, on the inside, were two gas-burners, giving a dim light befitting the scene.

The decorations of the Hall of Representatives were arranged under the direction of the artist, Mr. G. F. Wright, formerly from Hartford, the catafalque was designed by Colonel Schwartz . . . , while Mr. E. E. Myers had charge of the outside decorations. The materials for the decoration of the hall alone cost \$12,000; between 7, 000 and 8,000 yards of stuff were employed on the Capitol, inside and out.” [p. 1, col. 2]

VIEWING.

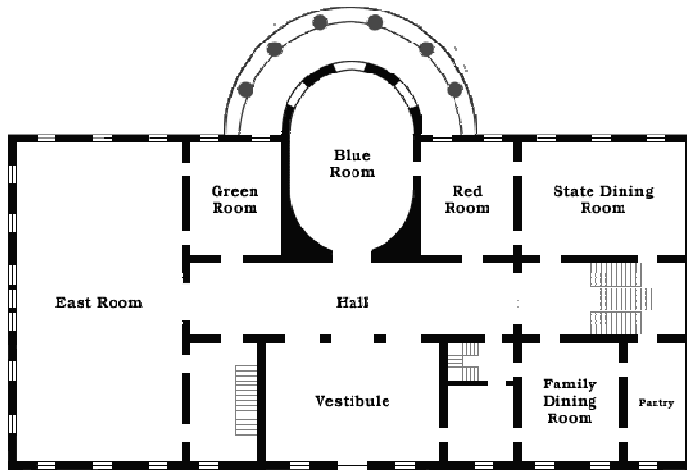
“All beholders were impressed with awe by the splendor of the surroundings, and by the solemn reminders of the grave which had met their gaze, and moved through in silence. They approached at the left hand of the corpse, passed around the head, and out on the opposite side. At midnight a train of cars came in on the Great Western Railroad, and the whole body of passengers filed at once down to the Capitol, and passed through. Trains were continually arriving, bringing thousands more, and at 3 o'clock in the morning of the 3d [4th] hundreds were walking in the streets unable to find any accommodation, although the citizens generally threw open their houses freely.” [p. 1, col. 2]

WHITE HOUSE BLUE ROOM

The blue room is the center of the state floor of the White House and has almost always been used as the principal reception room.

During the administration of John Adams, the blue room served as the south entrance hall. During the administration of James Madison, architect Benjamin Latrobe designed a suite of classical-revival furniture for the room, but the furnishings were destroyed in the fire of 1814. When the White House was rebuilt, President

James Monroe redecorated the room in the French Empire style. Martin Van Buren had the room decorated in blue in 1837, and it has remained the tradition ever since. During the administration of James Buchanan the room was refurnished in Rococo Revival style. Its oval shape was inspired by George Washington when he entertained people in Philadelphia.



President Monroe originally ordered French mahogany furniture through the American firm of Russell La Farge who had offices in France. Instead, the firm shipped gilded furniture stating "mahogany is not generally admitted into the furniture of a Salon even at private gentlemen's houses."

FORT SUMTER

Ft. Sumter is located in Charleston Harbor and was constructed on an artificial island made from granite from northern quarries. It is surrounded by the other fortifications of Forts Moultrie and Johnson, and Castle Pinckney. Prior to South Carolina's secession on December 20, 1860, the majority of forces were located at Ft. Moultrie under the command of Major Robert Anderson.



The election of Abraham Lincoln on November 6, 1860 started a chain reaction of southern states seceding from the Union starting with South Carolina on December 20. Other states soon followed: Mississippi on January 9, 1861, Alabama January 11, 1861, Georgia January 19, 1861, Louisiana January 26, 1861, and Texas February 1, 1861.

The seat of the Confederacy was established at Montgomery, Alabama and it attempted to assume authority over federal property such as forts and customhouses. The Confederacy's attempt to gain

control over forts in Union hands, such as Ft. Sumter and Ft. Pickens in Pensacola, Florida, placed the rival governments on a collision course. The Confederacy resolved on February 15 that "immediate steps should be taken to obtain possession of Forts Sumter and Pickens either by negotiations or force." President-elect Jefferson Davis was authorized to carry the resolution into effect.

Major Anderson was ordered to defend the forts if attacked but not to provoke hostilities. After December 20 Anderson's situation became more difficult and on the evening of December 26, he and his small force of

men left Ft. Moultrie and moved to Ft. Sumter which was considered more defensible. South Carolina viewed this as a hostile act and proceeded to occupy federal property in Charleston, including the military posts that surrounded Ft. Sumter. By January 1, Ft. Sumter was the only Union outpost in South Carolina.

A relief expedition headed by a chartered merchant steamer out of New York, the “Star of the West,” headed to Ft. Sumter and was fired upon by South Carolina troops. It was forced to turn around on January 9.

On April 10, 1861, Brigadier General P.T. Beauregard demanded the surrender of Ft. Sumter, and Major Anderson refused.

April 12, 1861 General Beauregard opened fire on the fort. After being bombarded for thirty-four hours, Major Anderson surrendered. The following day the fort was evacuated.

GETTYSBURG

Fought over the first three days of July 1863, the Battle of Gettysburg was one of the most critical battles of the Civil War. Often referred to as the “High Water Mark of the Confederacy,” it was the culmination of the second invasion of the North by General Robert E. Lee. The Union army met the Confederate invasion at the town of Gettysburg and though it was under a new commander, General George Gordon Meade, the



northerners fought with a desperation born of defending their home territory. The Union victory at the Battle of Gettysburg resulted in Lee's retreat to Virginia.

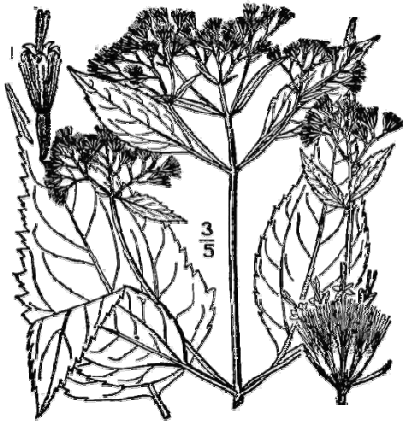
This battle had the largest number of casualties during the Civil War and soldiers' graves were scattered over the battlefield and at hospital sites around the area. Prominent Gettysburg residents became concerned with the poor condition of the graves and pleaded with Pennsylvania Governor Andrew Curtin for state support to purchase a portion of the battlefield to be set

aside as a final resting place for the Union dead. Removal of the dead to the cemetery began in the fall of 1863. The November 19, 1863, dedication ceremony featured orator Edward Everett, to honor those who had died at Gettysburg. Yet it was President Abraham Lincoln who provided the most notable words in his two-minute long address, eulogizing the Union soldiers buried at Gettysburg and reminding those in attendance of their sacrifice for the Union cause, that they should renew their devotion “to the cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion. . . .”

WHITE SNAKEROOT

Nancy Hanks Lincoln died after being poisoned by the milk of a cow that had ingested the poisonous plant *Ageratina altissima*, commonly known as white snakeroot. Milk sickness, as it was known, was most common

in dry years when cows wandered from poor pastures to the woods in search of food. In humans, the symptoms were loss of appetite, listlessness, weakness, vague pains, muscle stiffness, vomiting, abdominal discomfort, severe constipation, bad breath, and finally coma.



Also known as white sanicle or tall boneset, the plant is tall, growing to about five feet. It produces single or multi-stemmed clumps that are found in woods and brush thickets where they bloom mid to late summer or fall. The flowers are white color and after blooming small seeds are released to blow in the wind.

Reproduction white snakeroot is located in front of the cabin at the start of Journey One.